

# Naked Truth needs No Shift:

OR,  
An Answer to a Libellous Sheet,

Entituled,  
*The Quakers Last Shift Found Out.*

IT is with no small Regret, Sober Reader, that I am thus necessitated to Vindicate my own and my Friends Innocency, against these Unfair Assaults: I prefer Peace before War; and heartily desire loving Neighbourhood, rather than daily Contest; but this is our Satisfaction, we did not begin with them, but were begun with by them: And such great and general Accusations call for the like Defences; since where Charges go unanswered, Guilt is most usually reflected, especially where WE are concerned; there being a sort of Men devoted to misconstrue whatever we say or do, with whom it is become Criminal to defend our selves; and do deserve to be chid for saying, *They wrong us*: Such continued Unchristian Proceedings against us will, I hope, give all Impartial People to hold me excused for publishing this *second Vindication*, which I intreat them in the Love of God to consider, that they may the better find out where the SHIFT lieth, whether in us, or this Nameless Author and his Abettors.

The Intent of my Paper was, to meet with the *Vox populi*, or common Fame, that as we might be defended, so the People disabused, by declaring, that notwithstanding those Defamatory Reports City and Country had credited against us, we had NOT received their Information of the Meeting, much less designedly avoided it; That it was unfair to concern us in a Meeting without our Consent; and that we made them a solemn Offer of a Publick Meeting, &c.

Now let us see how well he hath made good his Title-Page, in which he calls his Paper an Answer to mine.

He tells us, that We made an Appeal to the Baptists against T. Hicks, and that upon this Appeal the Teachers and Elders among them desired T. H. that he would in a publick Meeting bring forth his Evidences and Witnesses: That Mr. Kiffin and Mr. Knowls wrote Letters the 15th of Aug. to W. P. and G. W. informing them of Time and Place.

But what is all this, to prove that we receiv'd any certain Account from them of the Meeting; that we purposely avoided the Meeting; and that we were so far unconcern'd in it, as that our Consent to meet was unnecessary? The Ground of my Paper.

He says that G. W. had notice at the Vizes, having seen a Letter of T. Hicks, sent to one in that Town: But suppose it to be true; what is that to me, the Person most of all concern'd in the matter? Or, how doth this reach P. Ford's Letter, writ to inform them of my Absence, and to desire the Meeting might be suspended, to prevent vain Boasting? Was it suspended? No. And hath not vain Boasting followed? Yes. A Surreptitious Meeting: A Vain Triumph! Doth not this Proceeding rather give to suspect a Design to meet in our Absence, that made it of no moment to the Meeting, after they heard of it, though before they writ for, desired and expected our Presence.

But faith he, W. P. was at home the Night before: Grant it; Must I therefore hear or know of any such Meeting, or my Concernment in it? I received no Account, I say again, of either the Meeting, or my Relation to it, directly or indirectly, till about Ten the Night after it was over. And for G. W.'s Knowledge of the Meeting, it is express with Injustice both to him and my self; for he had not that Account which belonged to him to have; Therefore not His Account. What was a Rumor to him; or T. Hicks's Letter to another man, receiving no Account himself, much less any Account of his Concern in the Meeting till the 29th of the last Month, which was the Day after the Meeting. Besides, must we take it for granted that G. W. was just then at Leisure to take Post for the Meeting; under both it had been well nigh impossible for him to reach it; for this Author tells us, that T. H. writ not till the Tuesday before the Fryday (to call'd) on which the Meeting was appointed; which was to give him little above a Day to ride about four score Miles: Moreover, He was then pre-engaged for Bristol; and so ignorant of his Concernment in the Meeting, as he after that writ to his Wife to know if our Friends were concern'd in it. This his SHIFT is too Thread-bare to palliate that unworthy Surprise.

But, Others had notice, said he. What then? say I. Were not we the Persons chiefly concern'd? Could any Body else have answer'd for T. Hicks besides himself? Who then could fill up our room, especially in matters of Fact? If T. H. was thought fit to be there to explain and vindicate his Dialogues, then should we in Defence of our Answers: But, if our Absence might so easily be dispensed with, why should T. H.'s Presence have been so requisite? for T. H. and his Books, against our Books only, were unreasonable Odds. The Plea should have layn between Books and Books, the Controversie being written: And if it was needful that as well he as his Dialogues should be there, then that as well we as our Answers; though I cannot see with what Liberty we could have defended our selves, since such as offered to say any thing on our behalf, were interrupted; which gives us Cause enough to believe, that this Person was beside the matter, when he tells us, that the Baptists were glad to see any of us there.

But he says, That I Prevaricate, in saying, The Baptists concern'd us in that Meeting, when we concern'd the Baptists in that Meeting: A SHIFT to be sure, though not his Last. I would fain know, if we were not concern'd in that Meeting, because we concern'd the Baptists in that Meeting; as I take it, we were reciprocally concern'd in that Meeting, and therefore equally interested in the Appointment of Time and Place; for was there not the same Reason that we should be there, *viva voce* to make good the Charge in our Book, as that T. H. should be there, *viva voce* to endeavour to clear his Book from our Charge? Never can they defend themselves from that Injustice. It is not the part of a just Judge, to hear and determine for one Party in the Absence of another. Besides, for what End did they pretend to give us notice, if not that we should be there? It must not be forgot, that while in their Letter to me they desire and expect us, in the Letter to J. Osgood they render it needless; nay, it was asserted by one eminent among them in that Meeting, as I am credibly inform-

ed, That neither G. W. nor W. P. were concerned to be present: If so, why was our undesign'd Absence reputed and reported to be the Consequence of our Fears?

But the Man thinks he hath a stronger Argument than all this, in my Book (intituled, the Spirit of Truth Vindicated, pag. 78. "That to which an Appeal is made must be capable of giving an Infallible Judgment, and so a true Judge, or else the Appeal is Foolish. He is so wise as to leave the Application to his Reader, for which Way he could make it bear to his Purpose, I know not: But let it suffice, First, That I made not the Appeal by him recited, as the Postscript of my Book proveth: Next, Nor can any sober Man think, we intended by our Appeal to the Baptists our abiding by their Judgment, be it right or wrong; The very Words of it show the Appeal to the Baptists, was not to try whether T. H. was guilty; but for Judgment against him, having proved him guilty: for that were to admit of their Judgment, to conclude us against our selves; they themselves will not think us so kind to them: Take the Appeal as this Person recites it; Now if you the Teachers and Elders among the Baptized People do not publicly clear your selves of T. Hicks, and these his unjust Proceedings against us; we may take it for granted, that you own his Work, and may justly deal with him as the Baptists great Champion, peculiar Agent or Representative, &c. Now I would fain know which Way this binds us from all further Meeting, upon the same Score? Nothing can be well clearer, then that this Appeal aim'd no further, then to know whether the Baptists would and would not or reject T. H.'s Proceedings, that we might the better understand whom to address our selves to next time. There is great Difference in the Nature of Appeals: And the Reason of my Writing, as he citeth me, was, to prove the Light capable of giving an infallible Judgment, from my Adversary's acknowledging it to be the Gift of God, and appealing to it, as a right Discerner, for Judgment about what is right, and what is wrong, which this Person, T. H. like, left out: Howbeit, thus far what he cites, reacheth our present Case; for doubtless, they had Power to give Judgment against T. H. if they had been but as willing to use it, having such clear Evidences in our Books before them. Nevertheless, this doth not prove, That we knew of the Meeting, that we were unconcern'd in it, or that we designedly shunn'd it: The Foundation of our Paper, no wayes shaken by this Libeller's Sheet. The Meeting was pretended for a Church-Examination; but almost every where, in and about London, noised by the Baptists themselves to have been for a Disputation, and our Absence accordingly interpreted: A manifest Injury to our Books, Persons and Profession.

For my Offer to J. Gladman, he meanly shifts it, and seeks to creep out at the Word FORMAL; so that we are to read it thus, 'William Penn did offer, but not formally Challenge, to meet T. Hicks with the Bible in one Hand, & with his Dialogue in the other. Let it be so; I hope it is enough to satisfy the World, that an Offer was made and rejected: Nor is my printed One more Formal; for it was on Purpose made to remove all Obstruction to a Meeting, upon Terms formally proposed; for which I shall produce a Witness in convenient Time and Place. In the mean while it is to be considered, that the Person mistakes, when he makes T. H. to have offered W. P. any such Meeting, whatever he might do to G. W. as the very Page he refers to in T. H.'s third Dialogue proves: Further, that he never offered me any Meeting, but in private, and that too not till after he had twice publicly wronged me, which was refused, not to decline a Meeting, but as reputing it too mean a Satisfaction.

For his reflective Commendation of my Prudence, because I did not, after their Example, appoint a Meeting without their Notice; it speaks so much the Justice of my Proceeding, that it reflects Folly upon his Mention of it, and not a little Falseness too, since a Meeting to be agreed upon by two Parties, cannot be said to be ledged in anyone of their Breasts, without telling a manifest Untruth.

His Black Menace of us and our Religion, with some Hydran Piece, suddenly to be published, we are very little solicitous about; our Consciences are approved to God in this Matter; and we hope (through his Assistance (however misrepresented to the World) before we have done, to approve our Cause just in the Minds of impartial People.

To conclude; since he tells us, That the Baptists have received Satisfaction in T. H.'s Proceedings against us (and great Cause we have to believe, that some of them were not ignorant of his Libel) I do hereby soberly renew my solemn Offer to them, and expect from them a Publick Meeting, wherein we may have Leave, as *viva voce*, to repeat and defend our Charges, as T. H. manifestly had to read and vindicate his Dialogues. And be it known to all those Baptists, that though the Controversie fall in T. Hicks, by our Appeal to them; yet that it riseth in them by their Justification of him: Therefore, as we can never acquiesce in their Proceedings, which he calls a Satisfaction, that have proved thus plainly injurious; so from them do we yet expect that Satisfaction, which we are bold to ask, and in Fidelity they are bound to give us, in the Face of a sober Auditory, at such Time and Place, as they and we, on Conference, shall mutually appoint.

The 11th of the 7th  
Month, 1674.

William Penn.

## POSTSCRIPT.

OUR Inducement to the Publication of these two Papers was not Vain Glory, or Worldly Reputation (which Christ Jesus our Lord and Saviour, hath taught us to dye to) but singly the Glory of God, the Honour of his Truth, and the rescuing of the Minds of People, from those false Reports they have been lately eninared into the Belief of, to the Hurt of their Immortal Souls.